

families will receive a decent wage. Those coming off welfare because of reform need to have an opportunity to move to a job where they can make a living.

The first test of sincerity on the welfare reform bill is whether we will leave this week defying the Republican leadership, Mr. Dole and Mr. GINGRICH, and increase the minimum wage. If we fail to do that, the critics can just say that this welfare reform debate was political hot air.

PERMISSION FOR SUNDRY COMMITTEES AND THEIR SUBCOMMITTEES TO SIT TODAY DURING THE 5-MINUTE RULE

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the following committees and their subcommittees be permitted to sit today while the House is meeting in the Committee of the Whole under the 5-minute rule: The Committee on Agriculture; the Committee on Banking and Financial Services; the Committee on Commerce; the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities; The Committee on Government Reform and Oversight; the Committee on International Relations; the Committee on the Judiciary; the Committee on Resources; the Committee on Science; the Committee on Small Business; the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

It is my understanding that the minority has been consulted and that there is no objection to these requests.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NETHERCUTT). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kansas?

There was no objection.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3754, LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order at any time to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 3754) making appropriations for the legislative branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997, and for other purposes, that all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration be waived, and that the conference report be considered as read when called up.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the order of the House of today,

I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 3754) making appropriations for the legislative branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report to accompany H.R. 3754 and that they may include tabular and extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of Wednesday, July 31, 1996, at page H9450).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the gentleman from California [Mr. PACKARD] and the gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. THORNTON] each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California [Mr. PACKARD].

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is the conference report on the legislative branch appropriations bill. It will cut from the 1996 program level over \$22 million and will keep us on the glidepath to a balanced budget.

HIGHLIGHTS—H.R. 3754 CONFERENCE REPORT CONTINUING PROGRAM OF OVERALL SAVINGS

\$22.3 million below 1996 program level (budget authority); \$48.6 million below in outlays.

Two-year reduction of \$226 million in BA and \$236 million in outlays.

Cut funding for 616 jobs in this bill; two year total of 1643 FTE'S=6.4 percent of legislative workforce.

House budget down by \$45 million and House staff down by 854 FTE's over 96-97 period.

If entire Federal budget were reduced proportionately, Federal budget would show a \$100 billion surplus (based on closed model extrapolation).

FRANKED MAIL REFORM

Make permanent law the 90-day before election ban on unsolicited mass mailings.

MOVING TOWARD CYBERCONGRESS

\$211 million provided for operations and investments in computers and telecommunications—12.5 percent of entire legislative budget (Senate excluded).

Expanding public access through Internet to public laws, Congressional debate, Congressional schedule, and other legislative matter via THOMAS and GPO ACCESS.

Established a legislative branch-wide information system working group—under

guidance of House Oversight Committee and Senate Rules Committee.

Directed a study of audio broadcasts of House proceedings.

STREAMLINING

Completing two-year program to downsize General Accounting Office by 25 percent.

Eliminated funding for jobs not being utilized by several agencies.

Converting permanent edition of bound Congressional Record, a 26 volume document, to CD-ROM: will expedite availability by at least 2 years, enhance the research capabilities of the document, and save over \$1 million annually.

Converting Congressional Serial Set, a 60 volume document to CD-ROM: will expedite availability by several years, enhance its use as a research tool, and save over \$1 million annually.

Clerk of the House will expand capability of House to use electronic formats for legislative documents to reduce printing and distribution costs.

Have deferred to authorizing Committees the Public Printer's plan to convert Federal Depository Program to electronic format.

INCREASING USE OF PRIVATE SECTOR

Outsourcing custodial work at Ford House Office Building; directed Architect to transfer affected staff to comparable jobs at comparable pay.

Conducting studies of other outsourcing possibilities at Power Plant, care and maintenance of other Congressional buildings.

Continue public-private sector collaboration on National Digital Library.

Public Printer to determine potential for privatizing GPO plant workload.

Looking for alternatives for operating the Botanic Garden.

CONFERENCE REPORT COMPARED TO HOUSE BILL

Added \$1.1 million for the Capitol Police.

Added \$244,000 for CBO.

Added \$1 million for the Library of Congress to pay for a Management study.

Added \$750,000 for a new backup power supply for the Library's computers.

\$250,000 reduction for the Joint Economic Committee; conferees believe the need for this joint committee should be reviewed with the idea that it will be phased out in the future. In the meantime, funding continues at a reduced level.

General Provisions; the bill contains a provision that will bring greater standardization to legislative information processes.

The Capitol Police will be able to elect to use comp time in lieu of paid overtime.

There is a provision that will remove copyright prohibitions from reproduction and distribution of braille and other special materials for the blind and other readers with disabilities.

COMPARED TO 602(B)'S

\$15 million below Budget Authority target. \$17 million below Outlay target.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT COMPARED TO ITEMS IN ORIGINAL HOUSE BILL

The House bill sent to the Senate was \$37.4 million below 1996 in BA and \$52.5 million below in outlays.

The conference agreement is \$34.4 million below in BA and \$48.5 below in outlays.